

Statement on the Sarajevo Marketplace Attack February 5, 1994

I am outraged by this deliberate attack on the people of Sarajevo. There can be no possible military justification for an attack against a marketplace where women, men, and children of the city were pursuing their everyday lives. The United Nations should urgently investigate this incident and clearly identify those who are guilty.

I have directed that Secretary Christopher engage our allies in Europe and the United Na-

tions on the situation and on appropriate next steps. As he and Secretary of Defense Perry have stated, we rule nothing out.

I have also directed the Department of Defense to offer its assistance in evacuating, hospitalizing, and treating those injured in this savage attack.

I know I speak for all Americans in expressing our revulsion and anger at this cowardly act.

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters on Bosnia February 6, 1994

The President. I have just completed a meeting with advisers discussing the terrible and outrageous incident in Sarajevo yesterday. I'm glad to report that the United States has been able to evacuate several of the wounded and their family members and they're on their way to a hospital in Germany. We'll be continuing to work on that.

I have asked Ambassador Albright to urge the United Nations to accelerate the efforts to try to confirm responsibility for the strike in the market yesterday. And I have approved having the Secretary of State and Ambassador Albright continue their consultations with our allies about what next steps should be taken in response to this particular incident and to make an effort to try to reach a settlement, hoping that the shock of this incident will perhaps make all parties more willing to bring this matter to a close.

The ultimate answer to all this killing is for the three parties to reach an agreement that they can live with and honor. There have been several times over the last couple of months when it didn't seem that they were all that far apart, and I hope that the shock of these deaths will reinforce to them, as it does to the entire world, that they ought to go on and reach a settlement. And we will do what we can to push that.

Q. Have you decided against air strikes, Mr. President?

The President. No, but it's not a decision—first of all, I want to give the U.N. a chance to confirm responsibility for this. Obviously, it seems highly likely that the Serbs are responsible, but there ought to be some effort to confirm it since their leader has denied it. And also, as you know, the authority under which air strikes can proceed, NATO acting out of area pursuant to U.N. authority, requires the common agreement of our NATO allies. So I cautioned them on this at our NATO meeting. Many of them remain concerned that because they have soldiers on the ground—something we don't have—that their soldiers will be retaliated against if we take action from the air. That's not to say that there won't be retaliation, because we certainly discussed it in considerable length today, and I discussed it yesterday. But I just want to try to explain why there's more reluctance on the part of some of the Europeans than there is on the part of the United States, because they do have troops on the ground, and they are worried about some retaliation coming to those troops.

Q. What are your thoughts now on lifting the arms embargo?

The President. I've always been for it. I haven't changed my position on that. I do believe, however, that the appropriate thing to do now is to see if this horrible incident can be the spur to a vigorous effort to achieve a peace agreement. And that's what we ought to focus

on now. If we continue to fail in the face of these kinds of incidents—I think that the United States position on the arms embargo is only reinforced by the kind of thing that happened yesterday. But I want to try to work with our allies now to take a shot at hoping we can bring this matter to a conclusion.

Q. Yesterday you said in your statement that you called the massacre a cowardly act. But some Members of Congress are saying that the U.S. is acting cowardly by repeatedly saying that they will consider air strikes without making good on those threats.

The President. Well, the United States, I will say again, under international law, in the absence of an attack on our people, does not have the authority to unilaterally undertake air strikes. And every time we discuss it, the other countries who have troops on the ground—and we don't. It's very well for these Members of Congress to say that; they don't have any constituents on the ground there. And the people who have constituents on the ground say, "Well, we have to think about whether our soldiers are going

to be killed in large numbers in retaliation for this if you do it."

Now, as you know, I have long believed that we should have standby air strike authority and that there are circumstances under which we should use it. In this case, again I want to say, the United Nations has not finished their confirmation process. And until they do, I think it would be inappropriate for me to make a final decision. But I do think you have to give some credence to the position of our European allies. They do have soldiers on the ground there who can be shot at and shelled long after our planes are gone, that is what is animating their position. That does not mean it won't happen this time. I have discussed it yesterday; I discussed it today. We are discussing it with our allies. But they are in a fundamentally different position, and they have been as long as they have had troops there.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:37 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, prior to his departure for Houston, TX.

Remarks at the American Cancer Society's Cattlebarons Children's Party in Houston, Texas February 6, 1994

The President. Well, hello, everybody.

Audience members. Hello.

The President. Have you had a good time at the party?

Audience members. Yes.

The President. Did you play some games?

Audience members. Yes.

The President. Some of you win?

Audience members. Yes.

The President. Well, that's good. I'm so glad to see all of you. I just came in from Washington on an airplane, and it was raining at the airport. And I'm glad to be here where it's dry. And I came in with your Mayor, Mayor Lanier, and Congressman Green. Who else is here? Is Congressman Washington here? Is anybody else here? Well, we're glad to see you, and I'm glad to be in Houston for a little while.

Audience members. That's all right.

The President. Yes, that's all right, isn't it?

You know, I—what's this? Is it for me? What's on that ring? What do you think?

Do you all want to ask me any questions? You do? What's your question?

The Presidency

Q. What's it like being President?

The President. What's it like being President? Well, depending on what kind of humor they're in, it can be a lot of fun. [Laughter] Listen, you want to know what's fun about it, what's good about it? What's good about it is I get to go all over America and meet all different kinds of people and know that I have to work for all of them, people of all ages and all races.

It's good because I get to do things that help people and help solve problems. One of the things that we are doing more of this year is putting more money into medical research, something that you support, right? [Applause]